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CDPM
DOCUMENTAÇÃO
01/96

Retyped copy of a hand-written document faxed to TAPOL on 23 January 1990
NB: Some words on the left margin were only partially legible on the fax. Words that were not decipherable are indicated by (....)

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TAPOL
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Oaths Act
Statutory Declaration

Declared at Darwin, the 23 day of January 1990, before me, Robyn Lynette Regattieri, Commissioner of Oaths (N.T.), telephone (089) 89 7953.

I, Jennifer Caroline Jane Groves,

Do solemnly and sincerely declare as follows:

Andrew McMillan and myself were sitting in the beer garden of the Hotel Tourismo discussing our travel plans with a tourist officer. Our conversation was interrupted by the sound of about 100-120 people coming into the hotel and walking up the stairs of the left wing and displaying their banners to the people in the beer garden below. These people appeared to be in the age range of 17-20 years, so we assumed they were students. About 15 of these students came down the stairs into the beer garden with their banners. At this point, military personnel came into the beer garden and started hitting these students with rifle butts, as well as physically trying to drag them off. Some of the students still on the balcony started throwing rocks at the military personnel. These rocks were returned to the students by the soldiers. Students also pulled leaves (?) off some of the plants growing in the window boxes on the balcony and threw these at the military personnel.

As suddenly as the scuffle had started, it stopped. The students continued to voice their (....). Andrew and I moved to the front of the hotel at this stage where a small crowd of hotel staff, tourists, Indonesian Government officials and American diplomatic staff (including the ambassador) had accumulated to watch the proceedings.

For a while the students continued to chant in a disorganized way until one student with a megaphone started speaking to the ambassador (Mr John Monjo), apologizing for the disturbance and putting the case across for human rights and independence of East Timor. They spoke to the ambassador in Bahasa Indonesian and so I was unable to understand most of what they were saying. However, there was an Australian tourist standing next to me who interpreted most of what was being said. This tourist's name was Juan; he did not give his second name and the only other information I have about him personally is his address and that he lectures in political science.

The conversation between the students and the ambassador initially took place face to face at a distance of only a metre or so. None of these talks could be overheard by the onlookers. These talks changed, to the students speaking through the megaphone to the ambassador who was standing in the entrance way to the hotel (....) speaking through a megaphone supplied by a government official.

Two government officials were walking around the student body and putting names down throughout these talks. At this stage, Andrew and I had our photographs taken with a flash.

At the completion of these talks, the ambassador (....) to attend a meeting with the governor. The students requested safe passage from the hotel by the ambassador, informing him that they would be beaten if they could not gain this as the hotel had been completely surrounded by police and military personel.

The ambassador eventually drove away. The students tried to follow the car but failed. At this point, the violence broke out. The police carried batons and the military carried rifles and used these weapons to push the students into a human mound and surrounding them against the fence. There were shoes scattered over the road as well as blood, and other articles of clothing. The students in the mound protected their heads from being beaten with their arms.

Once the human mound was formed, I saw a body which appeared very limp thrown onto the back of a truck and his face covered with a red rag. I later learned from red cross officials that he had died in the violence.

There were a number of other students who had a lot of blood on them and there were a (.... lot?) of injuries, possibly some serious.

After about five minutes, the students were allowed to break up the mound and they stayed up against the fence praying. Their prayers lasted about five minutes and many of the students were crying.

The students were then allowed to leave in the direction of the town. Government officials picked up the shoes and pieces of clothing (....) littered across the road. One student had (....) us a badly blood-stained T-shirt which was taken from us by a government official. As the students were leaving, we were approached by a government official but we did not have a conversation with him although it was obvious he was concerned about what we had seen.

The students took refuge at the bishop's house and the military and police left the hotel.

I went back to my hotel and concealed the film in my belongings, fearing it would be confiscated.

Andrew and I then went back into the beer garden, deciding what our next move should be. We were joined here by two of the ambassador's party who had remained in the hotel when the rest of the party had left for the meeting with the governor, and had therefore seen the whole incident. The two diplomats asked Andrew and I what we had seen. I said I had taken a couple of photographs (when in fact I had taken 37), and in conversation, Andrew informed them that he was a (....er). Another man joined the conversation (....) the name of Mark who was working in Dili with a catholic aid organization and (....) us through the red cross that there (....) two students officially dead. One of the dead was the body I had seen thrown onto the truck, though the other had been (....) escaping from the hotel. This student ran to the red cross building. After (....ing) the door, he had collapsed on the (....), vomited up some blood as well as the bullet that had killed him. The military followed the student into the red cross building, breaking down the door to get in and taking the student's body away. Later, we were told the ambassador had (....seen?) the bullet and the body in the red cross building.

The next day, Andrew and I went into Dili and bought tickets to Kupang. We had a conversation with Juan who gave us information on the general situation in East Timor as well as who we needed to contact when we returned to Darwin. Juan (....) then told us it was imperative we leave the country as quickly as possible as our (....) would be in peril once the photographs (that?) were taken of (off?) us had reached the customs officials.

We managed to leave the country with the film with no further incidence.